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Statement submitted by the Mulchand and Parpati Thadhani Foundation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2008/100.

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Statement

It is the mission of The MPTF to support & empower people marginalized by poverty, capacity deprivation, gender biases and disabilities- with focus on equity, justice, right to healthy sustainable living, health care, and food security. We mobilize the necessary resources for inclusive development - with priorities to enable (capacity deprived people) to participate in, and benefit from development. Thus the KEY issue is empowerment & enhancement of capacities, for positive MDG(s) outcomes in India and elsewhere.

In 2000; based on Millennium Declaration & MDG(s), the international community made a commitment to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and hunger between 2000 and 2015. Mid-way through this focus, as the world moves toward the deadline for achieving the MDGs, it is clear that some progress has been made. However, though poverty and malnutrition rates are declining, it is less clear who is actually being helped. Are development programs reaching most needy, or primarily benefiting those who are easier to reach, leaving the very poorest?

Micro-Finance (MF) is an empowering, capacity-building tool to poverty reduction rate that has provided significant economic and non-economic externalities to low-income households in developing countries. A gradual realization that MF in itself is not enough; that it is not a replacement for unemployment; inaccessible markets, inefficient education and/or health programs. The main objective of MF Institution and Poverty Alleviation, calls for a holistic and in-depth understanding of the interplay between economic, social and cultural components of the development process.

To that effect The MPTF has created its *MF (Credit/Grant) Fund/Program, being implemented in India. Since 2001 The MPTF has been participating in regional & global microcredit summits (submitting Institutional Plans since 2006 to participate as official delegate). With extensive meetings, field work/NGO visits (25-30), research, consultations and exposure to varied & multiple models of microcredit in India (implemented by NGO/GOVT/Banks and MFI), we have developed a program, which focuses on Integrated Model of Loans/Grants with Economic/Social/Health Empowerment. We believe that if poverty is about power, then solutions must focus on the empowerment of people themselves. "Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such scourges of our times ... as social evils ... ." Sustainable Development cannot occur without self-determination, without Human Rights Approach to Development. Human Rights equate Sustainable Development.

The Objectives/Strategies 2007-8 are:

A) To increase stakeholders' awareness of Micro-Finance integral to the development equation; To assess & promote contribution of Micro-Credit to MDGs; To encourage new partnerships-by promoting women's economic participation, gender equity and household well-being; To Promote Millennium Village Concept and integrated development involving all MDGs.

B) To undertake prudent actions as part of the global community to increase access to financial services; To ensure, that MF can be used effectively to contribute to the achievement of the Goals of the Millennium Declaration (2000).

C) To provide Micro-Loan/Grant to those living below poverty line of $1.00 a day (MDG1) for income enterprise- integrated with health, water, sanitation and hygiene related positive outcomes—which in turn will boost livelihoods—which would empower people to engage in sustainable activities.

D) The Thadhani Foundation's MICRO-CREDIT – FUND (MCF) is innovative and multi-dimensional in nature, designed to have direct impact on the poor – through various partnerships, including with NGO and other entities. This is totally in keeping with the United Nations development agenda & MDGs—poverty, health, education, gender issues and partnerships. The MPTF is a strong proponent of the Millennium Village Concept promoting cohesion and sustainability.

E) We provide capacity building, training and consultations, locally, regionally and internationally, as well as, Cash loans/grants to achieve sustainable results in India

F) Our strategic Model—in the final analysis-we believe is in keeping with the current and emerging problems related to the targets to be met by 2015. We plan to expand our reach and move toward self-sufficiency of the people we empower. Since access to financial services improves women's status, it is imperative that women play an active role in any microcredit program. As a result through Self-Help-Group and other strategies—women start owning land & property—and play STRONGER ROLE IN DECISION MAKING /LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES. Thus ensuring well-being of the families—children's education, diet and over all health.

G) If poverty is about power, then solutions must focus on the empowerment of the people themselves ... WE DO.